

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action dated May 6, 2003, all pending claims 1 and 45-63 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,589,280 (the Gibbons patent). As discussed in a telephone interview with the Examiner, Applicant and Examiner Piziali tentatively agreed that the present invention was distinguishable over the Gibbons patent. To that end, Applicant provided amendments and arguments in a Request for Reconsideration distinguishing the claims as presented over the Gibbons patent.

In an Advisory Action issued July 14, 2003, the Examiner indicated further distinction over the Gibbons patent was required. In Applicant's telephone interview of today with Examiner Piziali, agreement appears to have been reached regarding appropriate amendments to the claims to gain allowance. Those amendments are presented above and explained in detail below. It is noted that since the amendments provided in the First Request for Reconsideration were not entered, the amendments above are made to the claims as pending in the Final Office Action.

Applicant amends each of independent claims 1, 48, 52, 60, and 62 to clarify that the first polymeric layer is deposited "directly on" at least a portion of the article and that the article is formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal. Such amendments are offered to address the Examiner's concerns regarding the definition of "on" and to clarify that the first polymeric layer of the present invention is deposited directly on the article and not on an intermediate adhesive layer.

The purpose of the first polymeric layer to provide a leveling effect to the article is provided by amendment to further clarify why the polymeric layer must be deposited directly on the article. Finally, the Examiner addressed concerns over the article composition not being defined in the claims and requested additional clarification thereof. Therefore, Applicant has

provided the limitation in the independent claims that the article is formed from plastic, ceramic, or metal as supported in the specification. Such a limitation is believed to further distinguish the present invention over the prior art. Such a limitation appears to be properly clear and definitive as a proper alternative expression under MPEP 2173.05(h)(II). Other amendments provided herein are provided for the purpose of clarity.

Undersigned counsel is most appreciative of the Examiner's courtesy and assistance in discussing this matter. And while Applicant believes the comments and amendments presented herein should address the Examiner's concerns and properly place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to call undersigned counsel should any questions or comments arise regarding the reconsideration or allowance of the claims as presented herein.

Respectfully submitted,



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